

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1443

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
State Government & Tribal Relations

**Title:** An act relating to updating the process for online voter registration by allowing voter applicants to provide the last four digits of social security number for authentication.

**Brief Description:** Updating the process for online voter registration by allowing voter applicants to provide the last four digits of social security number for authentication.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Low, Christian, Abbarno, Chapman, Ormsby, Eslick, Gregerson and Pollet; by request of Secretary of State.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

State Government & Tribal Relations: 1/27/23, 2/7/23 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Permits people to register to vote online by providing the last four digits of their social security number, and requires them to submit a signature image to the Secretary of State (Secretary).
- Permits people to register to vote online with a tribal identification card without regard for whether the Secretary can obtain their signature from the federal government or the tribe, and requires them to provide a signature image to the Secretary.
- Requires people who register to vote online to confirm their United States citizenship and review the registration oath online as part of the registration process.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL RELATIONS**

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Signed by 6 members: Representatives Ramos, Chair; Stearns, Vice Chair; Christian, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Gregerson, Low and Mena.

**Minority Report:** Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Abbarno, Ranking Minority Member.

**Staff:** Jason Zolle (786-7124).

**Background:**

Voter Registration.

The Governor and Secretary of State (Secretary) designate certain state agencies to provide voter registration services. These designated agencies provide voter registration services for employees and the public in each office of the agency.

Applicants registering to vote must submit an application with their name, residential address, and date of birth, and they must check a box confirming their United States citizenship. The applicant must also sign the application to attest to the truth of the information provided.

An applicant may register to vote online if the applicant has a Washington driver's license or state identification card. The Secretary must obtain a digital copy of the driver's license or identification card from the Department of Licensing. An applicant may also register online if they have a valid tribal identification card if the Secretary can obtain a copy of their signature from the federal government or the tribe.

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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

An applicant may register to vote online by providing the last four digits of their social security number, and they are required to submit a signature image to the Secretary.

An applicant may register to vote online with a tribal identification card without regard for whether the Secretary can obtain their signature from the federal government or the tribe, and they are required to provide a signature image to the Secretary.

An applicant who registers to vote online must confirm their United States citizenship by reviewing the registration oath online as part of the registration process.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The substitute bill requires, rather than permits, applicants who register to vote online without Washington state issued identification—i.e., with a social security number or a tribal identification card—to provide a signature image to the Secretary.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill takes effect on July 15, 2024.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) This bill was requested by the Secretary as a commonsense way to give people more opportunities to register to vote. Previously, the state's election system would sync only with the Department of Licensing list of licensees, but the state now has a connection to the Social Security Number Database. It makes sense to allow registering to vote online with a social security number because the paper voter registration form already allows that. Online registration is popular and should be just as inclusive, as some people have disabilities that make it so they do not need a drivers' license. It is important that our elections are secure, and this bill helps by requiring people to confirm they are a citizen.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Sam Low, prime sponsor; Carol Sullivan, League of Women Voters of Washington; Steve Hobbs, Office of the Secretary of State; Jazmine Smith, The Washington Bus; and Cindy Black, Fix Democracy First.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.